

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act was intended to protect the civil liberties of Americans while also allowing our intelligence agencies to collect the intelligence information that can protect us. That is all it was intended to do. But it has become outdated because of changes in technology.

We have a bill that has been passed in the Senate by 68 votes. There has been a letter from 20 Democrats to their own leadership saying, please, take up this bill because we want to vote for it. We all know here that if we were allowed to vote on this bill, it would pass overwhelmingly in the House, and the President has already said that he would sign it. Instead, we are here tonight, 10 days after a law expired, that our Director of National Intelligence, Admiral Mike McConnell, has said has already degraded our ability to gather intelligence on the people who are trying to kill Americans. I think that is inexcusable.

I think we made a decision as a country on the morning of 9/11. We made a decision that we were going to go on offense. We were going to play away games because the home games cost too much.

I want the leaders of al Qaeda hiding in a hole in the mountains between Pakistan and Afghanistan wondering whether they can use their cell phones without being detected by American Special Forces, rather than Americans using their cell phones to call home one last time. That is the difference.

As my colleagues from Texas and Pennsylvania said, God forbid, God forbid that we have to have another 9/11 Commission, that we have another terrorist attack. I believe that the greatest accomplishment of the last 6 years has been what has not happened. There has not been another terrorist attack on our soil, and they have tried. Our first line of defense in preventing another terrorist attack is good intelligence. And because this law expired 10 days ago, we are tying the hands of the intelligence agencies who are sworn to protect us. We are making them jump through hoops that in some cases are too high and taking tremendous risks for the American people. Why? Because a minority of Democrats, including their leadership, refuse to allow a bipartisan bill to be brought up on the floor of this House. Shame on them. Shame on them for not putting the security of this country first.

If we have that other commission after another terrorist attack, they are going to be saying, why didn't you protect us? What you are seeing tonight is why. You can't connect the dots unless you can collect the dots in the first place. This is about allowing our intelligence agencies to collect the dots that can protect us.

I would urge the Democratic leadership, as my colleague from Pennsylvania said, to take "yes" for an answer, to fix this problem, to close this

gap this week. We have nine suspensions on the floor. We are naming post offices tomorrow. Pull it up tomorrow. And I will stand here shoulder to shoulder with them on the floor of this House, we will overwhelmingly pass it, and we can walk down to the White House tomorrow afternoon so that the President can sign it and protect this country.

I yield the balance of our time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. EDWARDS (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of death in the family.

Mr. ELLISON (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of medical reasons.

Mr. SHERMAN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Ms. WOOLSEY (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and for the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

Mr. LUCAS (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of a family commitment.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. KAPTUR) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. KIRK) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, today and February 26, 27, and 28.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today and February 26, 27, and 28.

Mr. KIRK, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, for 5 minutes, today and February 26, 27, and 28.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, February 28.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the House stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. tomorrow for morning-hour debate.

There was no objection.

Accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at 10:30 a.m., for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5440. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting notice of the completion of a public-private competition at the Defense Logistics Agency, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2462(a); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5441. A letter from the Chief, Programs and Legislation Division, Office of Legislative Liaison, Department of the Air Force, Department of Defense, transmitting notice of a public-private competition of the Commander of Headquarters Air Combat Command (HQ ACC), 57th Maintenance Group, Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2462; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5442. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's quarterly report as of December 31, 2007, entitled, "Acceptance of contributions for defense programs, projects and activities; Defense Cooperation Account," pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2608; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5443. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5444. A letter from the District of Columbia Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, "Letter Report: Certification of the Fiscal Year 2008 Total Non-Dedicated Local Source Revenues in Support of the District's \$333,840,000 General Obligation Bonds (2007C)," pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5445. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's 2007 Annual Report on Grants Streamlining, pursuant to Public Law 106-107, section 5; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5446. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Mgmt., Department of Labor, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

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5448. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Mgmt., Department of Labor, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5449. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5450. A letter from the Secretary, Mississippi River Commission, Department of the Army, Department of the Army, transmitting a copy of the annual report in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act covering the calendar year 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5451. A letter from the Associate Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's Annual Report on